

suspicion was slightly reinforced about a week later when I visited the Certosa di Pavia, a beautiful 14th century monastery just outside Pavia. The Certosa is approached along an avenue of lime trees. Many of these trees also had *L. dispar* larvae on the trunks, and again there was no evidence that they were eating the foliage. Other *L. dispar* larvae were seen near the Certosa on the trunks of poplars which are grown in plantations on an extensive scale as a timber crop in this part of Italy.

As a side note, it was very notable that the larvae were extremely variable in colour, ranging from pale grey, through various brownish or bluish grey shades, to a dark sooty almost black form. Most were more or less uniform in their ground colour, but some of the mid-grey forms had a sooty black stripe along the back. I had bred this species in Britain from imported stock before, but have never noticed this degree of variation before.

If anyone has any comments on either the behaviour of the larvae or their colour variation I would be most interested, particularly if anyone can either confirm my suspicion that they are grazing on lichens or algae, or offer an alternative explanation. — DR. M. MAJERUS, Department of Genetics, University of Cambridge, Downing Street, Cambridge CB2 3EH.

HEODES TITYRUS PODA. (THE SOOTY COPPER) IN SUSSEX: A DOUBTFUL RECORD. — Mr. C. Nixon gave me a female specimen of this species reported (*Ent. Record* 1960, vol. 72, p.263; see also p.251) to have been caught by him at Seaford, Sussex in August 1958. This specimen appears referable to ssp. *tityrus*, and the butterfly is described in Howarth, *South's British Butterflies* p.72, as being introduced or of accidental occurrence, having been recorded in Britain only once before, in Devon in 1887. Nixon told me, however, that he is by no means certain that he caught it at Seaford, and more than likely mixed it up with other butterflies he took in Interlaken, Switzerland in 1955 (which also did not bear his own labels). — D. C. LEES, 74 Woodcrest Road, Purley, Surrey CR2 4JB.

APOROPHYLA LUTULENTA D. & S. (DEEP-BROWN DART), LARVA FEEDING ON RANUNCULUS ACRIS L. FLOWERS. — On 8th May, 1983, I collected a single larva of a nearly full-fed Noctuid which proved to be *Aporophyla lutulenta*. It was at rest, head downwards during daylight, on a vertical stem of *Ranunculus acris*, the meadow buttercup, in a field near Aveley, Essex, (O.S. ref. TQ 573821). The petals on the flowers of this particular plant had been partly eaten, and with the permission of the landowner, the entire plant was transplanted to my own garden. The larva continued to feed on the flowers preferring the petals, but when these became un-available it ate the entire flower head of recently opened buds, but always avoiding the sepals. Pupation took place on 14th May, and the moth, a male, emerged on 22nd September, 1983.